[*Translation*]

Loans for Transport Vehicles

*332. SHRI PHOOL CHAND VERMA:
DR. LAXMINARAYAN PANDEYA:

Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the nationalised banks have stopped providing loans for purchase of transport vehicles;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor; and

(c) the action taken by the Government to reintroduce this facility?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI DALBIR SINGH): (a) Reserve Bank of India has not issued any instructions to the banks imposing any ban on transport loans.

(b) and (c). Do not arise.

[*English*]

National Savings Scheme

*333. SHRI V.S. VIJAYARAGHAVAN:
PROF. K.V. THOMAS:

Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the depositors to the National Savings Scheme are paid a lower rate of interest than those given by commercial banks, housing finance institutions, Mutual Funds and the Unit Trust of India;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor;

(c) whether the Union Government have any proposal to enhance the rate of interest under this Scheme;

(d) if so, the details thereof; and

(e) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI DALBIR SINGH): (a) and (b). Deposits in National Savings Scheme cannot be compared with the deposits in commercial banks etc. merely on the basis of interest. Deposits in this scheme are at present deductible from income for tax purposes upto Rs. 40,000/- and this is the main reason for investors' preference for the Scheme.

(c) to (e). The rates of interest on various small savings schemes are reviewed by the Government from time to time keeping in view the interest rates on comparable schemes as well as tax benefits available.

Export of Leather Goods

*334. SHRI RAMASHRAY PRASAD SINGH: Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state:

(a) the foreign exchange earned by export of leather goods during 1991–92 so far; and

(b) the target fixed for 1992–93?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE (SHRI P. CHIDAMBARAM): (a) The value of exports and hence foreign exchange earned of leather goods (including footwear, footwear components and garments but excluding finished leather) as estimated by council for Leather exports, Madras is Rs. 1779 crores during the period April, 1991 to January 1992.

(b) An export target of Rs. 3300 crores has been proposed for leather goods (ex-

cluding finished leather) by the Council for leather Exports for 1992–93.

Calcutta Port

*335. SHRI SANAT KUMAR MANDAL: Will the Minister of SURFACE TRANSPORT be pleased to state:

(a) whether the attention of the Government has been drawn to the news item captioned "Calcutta Port in deep Waters" appearing in the 'Financial Express', New Delhi dated 24th February, 1992;

(b) if so, the facts thereof and the reaction of the Government thereto;

(c) the investment made in Calcutta Port so far;

(d) the measures taken or being taken to improve the infrastructure facilities at the Port for handling the growing cargo;

(e) whether any hydrographic surveys have been conducted at the Port to combat the menace of silting in the Hooghly;

(f) if so, the outcome thereof and, if not the reasons therefor;

(g) whether the Government propose to accept the French help to pull Calcutta Port out of deep waters;

(h) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF SURFACE TRANSPORT (SHRI JAGDISH TYTLER): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) to (d). The newspaper report highlights the inadequate infrastructure facilities at the Calcutta Port. A total investment of Rs. 553.98 crores has been made in Calcutta Port from the First Five Year Plan till date. This includes an anticipated expenditure of Rs. 72 crores during the year 1992–92. The investment is for the development of infrastructure facilities and for acquisition of cargo handling equipments.

(e) Yes, Sir.

(f) Dredging is carried out continuously to rectify deficiencies detected through the hydrographic survey.

(g) No such proposal has been received.

(h) Does not arise.

Jute Development Fund

*336. SHRI SATYAGOPAL MISRA: Will the Minister of TEXTILES be pleased to state:

(a) The amount spent from the Jute Development Fund during each of the last three years; and

(b) The details fo the activities undertaken?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF TEXTILES (SHRI ASHOK GEHLOT): (a) and (b). The allocation and release made upto 31st December, 1991 in respect of various schemes under Special Jute Development Fund are as follows:–

S. No.	*Purpose*	*Allocation*	*Utilisation*
1.	Jute Agricultural Development Programme	Rs. 25 crores	Rs. 18.00 crores